

# GCBA NEWSLETTER

Season 2016-17

October 2016

## Programme

This month we have -

- Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> : Winter Teams 2
- Mon 9<sup>th</sup> : Winter Pairs 2
- Mon 16<sup>th</sup> : League 2
- Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> : County Knock Out
- Mon 30<sup>th</sup> : League 3

The teams are allocated for the League, but for other teams events you just turn up as a foursome, although advance warning to the CTD ([ctd@gcba.org.uk](mailto:ctd@gcba.org.uk)) for any Swiss event is very helpful. For the pairs events, just turn up as a pair.

## GCBA WEEKENDS

The next event is the Bredon Vale Cup on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October, to which clubs across the county are invited to send up to three teams-of-4. Starting time is 1330 and the event should finish by 1800. Each team is restricted to have at most one player National Master or above. The entry fee is £5 per player, which includes tea.

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After that comes, on Sunday 6th November, the Everett Cup. It is a teams-of-4 event but the details are still being sorted out. Please check the website ([www.gcba.org.uk](http://www.gcba.org.uk)) for details including the start time.

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## Bridge in Poland

In the World Championships in Wroclaw in September, the best British performance was by the Scottish Ladies who exceeded expectations by reaching the last four in their event. They nearly beat France in the semi-final and then lost the Bronze Medal match to China.

The English Open team lost in the round of 8 to the eventual winners, the Netherlands. The English Ladies team lost in the same round to China. The English Seniors team didn't make the last 16, but the Mixed team did – only to lose there to Bulgaria.

The Pairs Championships were marred by a number of scoring errors on Bridgemates. In the final of three events there were scores recorded with a declarer from the wrong side. Twice it changed the outcome for the Gold Medal, and in one it took a few inconsequential points from the Silver medallists. Although the WBF has not responded, there is a call (from Gold medallists too) to remedy this injustice.

The difficulty is that a correction time (which was very tight) had been declared, and these errors were not noticed until after that period had expired. The World Bridge Federation eventually awarded the gold medals equally to the first two pairs in each event.

Correction times for GCBA Monday events are generally 8 days, but for weekend events it might be prudent to have all awards of prizes and trophies in the future as provisional.

## GCBA Results

*On the first round of the Swiss Teams, there were 11 teams and after two matches the leading scores were very close : Joe Angseesing's team and David Atthey's team are both on 31, followed by Garry Watson's team on 30 VPs.*

*In the first session of the Winter Pairs, the top scorers were Tony Hill & Alan Wearmouth with a massive 67% followed by Peter Swales & Anne Swannell on 58%. There is time for everyone to catch up, as your best four scores over the six sessions is what counts.*

*The County League has 14 teams, with 8 teams in Division One this year. The best results on the first match went to Alan Wearmouth's team in Division One, and to Martin McWilliam's and James Hastie's teams in Division Two.*

*In the Ladies Pairs the winners were Val Constable & Alison Pritchard ahead of Mary Jones & Cynthia Moore.*

*In the Men's Pairs the winners were Patrick Shields & Garry Watson, by a whisker from Ashok Kwatra & David Simons. The runners-up were very unlucky in that the two good slam hands of the day both came on the two boards they sat out!*

## CALLING THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

Some of the most difficult problems a TD will see are those which come from players not calling the TD as soon as an issue arises, but trying to apply the Laws themselves. Applying the rules ahead of calling the TD can also create a lot of ill-feeling. Please call the TD as soon as an issue arises. The playing TD will be quite happy to attend; at worst you'll have to pause for a minute before the TD is free.

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## Winter Teams 1

There were many interesting hands in the first round of the Swiss Teams. This first hand was a bidding problem solved at only one table of the ten who played it.

♠ 63		♠ AK7
♥ 98632	B 7	♥ 4
♦ AQ	DLR : S	♦ KT64
♣ AQ65	VUL : all	♣ KJT84

After South passed West was allowed to open. Although some did, opening and possibly re-bidding a heart suit of this quality is too much to stomach. So a 1N opening is preferred.

Over this East needs to have a mechanism to show a three suiter with short hearts. For some a 3♥ bid (all three level jumps being shortage) does that and if chosen it allows West to set the suit with 4♣.

If East shows any slam interest now – say with a cue bid – West should feel very comfortable in bidding the slam, because that hand does not include any stray jacks or wasted values in hearts, which would make this hand much less suitable.

Only one pair managed to reach the (6♣) slam, so well done to Andrea & Stan Powell. They started 1♥-2♣-3♣ but after both refused(?) to bid 3N, the responder raised 5♣ to 6♣.

There were another two hands where (roughly two) cards lay well enough to make a slam, but, rightly, nobody bid those. There were also two hands where a slam was bid missing two aces (one does wonder why - two different pairs here).

And there was this interesting slam hand, bid by three of the ten pairs who held these cards.

♠ AK95432		
♥ 7		
♦ 9		
♣ 9732		
♠ 8		♠ QJ
♥ KJT83	B 3	♥ AQ942
♦ AKJ753	DLR : S	♦ T64
♣ 5	VUL : EW	♣ AK8
♠ T76		
♥ 65		
♦ Q82		
♣ QJT64		

West got to open 1♦ but North was determined to interfere, and that was done most effectively by a 4♠ bid, although some only bid 3♠. Over either of these bids East will produce a double – which should be taken as showing high cards outside spades, and with a tendency to takeout.

West is clearly not going to defend in these circumstances. When North had bid only 3♠, South now raised to 4♠, putting all the Wests in the same position. The hand is clearly worth a 5♥ bid at this point, and the slam is reached if/when East raises to slam.

One table played 6♥ by East and South led the ♣Q making life easy. We must presume that something was said about leading partner's suit!

After a spade is cashed 6♥ comes down to how to play the diamonds. With no further information, the odds favour cashing the AK, but when, after drawing trumps, the vacant spaces (assuming spades 7-3) are 8 with South and 5 with North, then the odds change. Declarer should cash one top diamond and then run the ♦T. This succeeds. Only one of the two declarers faced with this problem were successful (but my team still went on to win the match by 2 imps).

## Ladies/Mens Pairs

This hand offered a reasonably sign-posted end play position, although it was missed more often than found.

♠ K8543		
♥ A53		
♦ AT3		
♣ A2		
♠ QJT96		♠ 7
♥ KJ86	B 10	♥ QT74
♦ K	DLR : E	♦ 7642
♣ Q43	VUL : all	♣ T965
♠ A2		
♥ 92		
♦ QJ985		
♣ KJ87		

South opened 1♦ and West usually overcalled 1♠ although some doubled (the current wisdom is always to start with your five card major). North ended in 3N and got a lead from East of one of the major suits.

On the lead of a spade, declarer can see the contract is safe, and wins the ♠A to play on diamonds. As these get cashed West is in some difficulties. At most one spade can be discarded, and no clubs, so West throws three hearts.

Paul Denning, sitting North, saw the shape now and cashed the ♥A (extracting West's last heart) and then the ♣A (to avoid a suit blockage) before throwing West in with spades, and forcing a lead into the ♣KJ at the end for 11 tricks.

If the lead was a heart then the ending is different. North needs to duck two rounds of that suit before crossing to the ♠A and then playing diamonds. In the end position West cannot keep spades and clubs, and whichever one is unguarded gives declarer an extra trick in that suit.

In both cases West's best chance against an alert declarer is to un-guard clubs early and hope declarer plays East for the ♣Q.